

**CONSOLATION &
ENCOURAGEMENT**

BARUCH 4:5 – 5:9

Widowed Jerusalem

- ⁵Take courage, my people,
who perpetuate Israel's name!
⁶It was not for destruction
that you were sold to the nations,
but you were handed over to your enemies
because you angered God.
⁷For you provoked the one who made you
by sacrificing to demons and not to God.
⁸You forgot the everlasting God,
who brought you up, and
you grieved Jerusalem, who reared you.
⁹For she saw the wrath that came
upon you from God, and she said:
Listen, you neighbours of Zion,
God has brought great sorrow upon me;
¹⁰for I have seen the exile of my sons
and daughters,
which the Everlasting brought upon them.
¹¹With joy I nurtured them,
but I sent them away with weeping
and sorrow.
¹²Let no one rejoice over me, a widow
and bereaved of many;
I was left desolate because of the
sins of my children,
because they turned away from the
law of God.
¹³They had no regard for his statutes;
they did not walk in the ways of
God's commandments,
or tread the paths his righteousness
showed them.
¹⁴Let the neighbours of Zion come;
remember the capture of my sons
and daughters,
which the Everlasting brought upon them.
¹⁵For he brought a distant nation
against them,
a nation ruthless and of a strange
language,
which had no respect for the aged
and no pity for a child.
¹⁶They led away the widow's beloved sons,
and bereaved the lonely woman
of her daughters.

There are echoes here of Deuteronomy 32:17-18

They sacrificed to demons, not God, to deities they had never known, to new ones recently arrived, whom your ancestors had not feared. You were unmindful of the Rock that bore you; you forgot the God who gave you birth.

The author of this poem speaks of 'the Everlasting God'(verse 8, see verse 10 and frequently in this poem).

From verse 8 on Jerusalem is personified as a grieving mother.

For Jerusalem as a widow deserted by her children see Isaiah 49:21; 54:1,4).

The 'distant nation' could refer to the Greeks, but it could also refer to the Romans, which would support the idea that this is a first century BC addition to the scroll.

From verse 17 to 29, Jerusalem attempts to comfort her exiled children, assuring them that God will come to their aid.

- ¹⁷**But I, how can I help you?**
- ¹⁸**For he who brought these calamities upon you will deliver you from the hand of your enemies.**
- ¹⁹**Go, my children, go; for I have been left desolate.**
- ²⁰**I have taken off the robe of peace and put on sackcloth for my supplication; I will cry to the Everlasting all my days.**
- ²¹**Take courage, my children, cry to God, and he will deliver you from the power and hand of the enemy.**
- ²²**For I have put my hope in the Everlasting to save you, and joy has come to me from the Holy One, because of the mercy that will soon come to you from your everlasting saviour.**
- ²³**For I sent you out with sorrow and weeping, but God will give you back to me with joy and gladness forever.**
- ²⁴**For as the neighbors of Zion have now seen your capture, so they soon will see your salvation by God, which will come to you with great glory and with the splendour of the Everlasting.**
- ²⁵**My children, endure with patience the wrath that has come upon you from God.**
- Your enemy has overtaken you, but you will soon see their destruction and will tread upon their necks.**
- ²⁶**My pampered children have travelled rough roads; they were taken away like a flock carried off by the enemy.**
- ²⁷**Take courage, my children, and cry to God, for you will be remembered by the one who brought this upon you.**
- ²⁸**For just as you were disposed to go astray from God, return with tenfold zeal to seek him.**
- ²⁹**For the one who brought these calamities upon you will bring you everlasting joy with your salvation.**

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³⁰Take courage, O Jerusalem,
for the one who named you will
comfort you.

³¹Wretched will be those who
mistreated you
and who rejoiced at your fall.

³²Wretched will be the cities that
your children served as slaves;
wretched will be the city that
received your offspring.

³³For just as she rejoiced at your fall
and was glad for your ruin,
so she will be grieved at her
own desolation.

³⁴I will take away her pride in her
great population,
and her insolence will be turned
to grief.

³⁵For fire will come upon her from
the Everlasting for many days,
and for a long time she will be
inhabited by demons.

³⁶Look toward the east, O Jerusalem,
and see the joy that is coming
to you from God.

³⁷Look, your children are coming,
whom you sent away;
they are coming, gathered from
east and west,
at the word of the Holy One,
rejoicing in the glory of God.

The author speaks now as a prophet, offering Jerusalem hope and salvation.

Verse 35 draws on Isaiah 13:19-21.

The first century BC person responsible for including this poem in the Baruch scroll is presenting Jeremiah's secretary as foreseeing the return of the exiles from Babylon. God will always restore his people, whatever nation dares to oppress them.

**¹Take off the garment of your sorrow
and affliction, O Jerusalem,
and put on forever the beauty of
the glory from God.**

**²Put on the robe of the righteousness
that comes from God;
put on your head the diadem of the
glory of the Everlasting;**

**³for God will show your splendour
everywhere under heaven.**

**⁴For God will give you evermore
the name,
"Righteous Peace, Godly Glory."**

**⁵Arise, O Jerusalem, stand upon the
height;
look toward the east,
and see your children gathered
from west and east
at the word of the Holy One,
rejoicing that God has remembered
them.**

**⁶For they went out from you on foot,
led away by their enemies;
but God will bring them back to
you,
carried in glory, as on a royal
throne.**

**⁷For God has ordered that every
high mountain and the everlasting
hills be made low
and the valleys filled up,
to make level ground,
so that Israel may walk safely in
the glory of God.**

**⁸The woods and every fragrant tree
have shaded Israel at God's
command.**

**⁹For God will lead Israel with joy,
in the light of his glory,
with the mercy and righteousness
that come from him.**

It is in this final section that we see many parallels with the eleventh psalm of the first century BC pseudepigraphic document, the '*Psalms of Solomon*'. Either these verses of Baruch are dependent on the Psalm of Solomon, or both texts are drawing on a synogue hymn.

'Jerusalem, put on the garments of your glory'(Psalm of Solomon 11: 8).

'Stand on a high place, O Jerusalem, and look at your children; from the east and the west assembled together'(Psalm of Solomon 11:3).

'He flattened high mountains into level ground for them'(Psalm of Solomon 11:5).

'The forests shaded them ... God made every fragrant tree to grow for them'(Psalm of Solomon 11:6-7).

